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ABSTRACT

Real change in education has been hampered by at least three forces: education's lack of a vision of where society is moving and how education should play a part in this movement; the human makeup of educational institutions; and the need for the development of a new model for financing public postsecondary education. Regardless of these difficulties, a paradigm shift is required in postsecondary education to make the educational process more focused on student needs, more efficient, more convenient. A model needs to be developed that shifts the cost burden of education from taxpayers. The Educational Mall concept represents a 21st Century educational delivery center integrating a broad range of collegiate-level education services with area business and industry and community redevelopment. Included within the mall could be: (1) stores which double as merchandising and marketing laboratories; (2) a small business incubator offering training and counseling; (3) an assessment center; (4) food services which meet the needs of the community and serve as training labs for culinary arts programs; (5) a business skills center; (6) a child care center providing child care, parenting classes, and early childhood education training; (7) a basic skills center; (8) a high technology learning center; (9) a contract education center; (10) a tutorial center; (11) a fitness center; (12) a women's center providing re-entry, health, and wellness counseling; (13) a conference center; (14) a dental clinic to provide services and training; and (15) an entertainment center. The idea of an education mall is driven by such factors as limited state and national funding for education; a continuing need for better-trained workers; increasing part-time college attendance; students' needs to combine upper- and lower-division classes and occupational and recreational classes at one convenient location; the expense of traditional campuses; the role of assessment in retraining; and the ability of learning resource centers to interact with various databases and interactive cable television for instructional delivery. (KP)

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THE EDUCATION MALL

"A 21st Century Learning Concept"

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THE EDUCATION MALL

WARNING:

What you are about to read is a concept for a major paradigm shift in post-secondary education. Its primary purpose is to make the educational process more focused on student needs, more efficient, more convenient, and to develop a model that will shift the cost burden of education from taxpayers to a unique symbiotic venture between the public and private sector. While the primary target beneficiary of this proposal is the individual student, considerable benefits are also realized by business and industry and the community's economic development.

BACKGROUND

These recommendations come as the result of our firm's collective experience of over one-hundred years in public post-secondary education, closely followed by an additional collective twenty years of experience serving as educational consultants to over forty colleges in the development of their educational master plans, land management plans, and in the development of long-range financial models for public and private sector organizations.

All of the above experience has demonstrated that real change in education has been hampered by at least three major forces. The first, education's lack of a vision of where society is moving and how education should play a part in this movement; second, the human makeup of the educational institutions themselves; third, the need for the development of a new model for the financing of public post-secondary education.

A key ingredient in this lack of vision of where society is moving is the tendency for education and educators to be dominated by inertia, following the status quo rather than confronting the need for change. Several factors have accounted for this situation, one, the tendency for educational research to be descriptive rather than projective. To comprehend change requires a research orientation that asks, "Where will society, employment, the economy, and the world, be in ten years?" These are "where are we going?" questions. Typically in education questions are asked relating to, "How many students graduated last year? ... How many dropped out?... How many received "A" grades?" These are, "Where have we been" questions. Simply stated, you can't get to the future by gearing your research to describing the past! A second element in support of the status quo orientation of education is the relative isolation that is typical on most campuses. Educators tend to talk to educators. Educators tend to self-perpetuate their "truths", rather than test them in the open market. Educators tend to teach this semester's course in much the same manner as they taught it last semester. Educators tend to offer the same courses and programs this year as they did last year.

To escape from the trap of the status quo, education must utilize a research orientation that asks, "What will happen next?" In this process they also need to interface with non-educators to see the changes that are occurring on a regular basis in society at large. By doing this, the educator's viewpoint will be altered to the reality of the economic, occupational, social, and educational needs of the world around them and they will be provided with a sense of direction enabling them to track the trends of today to the likely educational needs of the students of tomorrow.

A second barrier to change in education lies in the human and structural makeup of the institutions themselves. Education has a sizeable number of individuals who are, by their nature, non-risk-takers. Furthermore, the multi-level organizational structure of the institutions themselves does not contribute to responsiveness to change, and in addition, once a non risk-taker has ascended to an administrative leadership role, they will be even less likely to permit risky organizational behavior that could jeopardize their present administrative position. Finally, absent an understanding of change as a phenomena, absent the research data to indicate the change imperative, and because of the relative isolation of the educational institution from the rest of society, any visions of the future are rarely recognized or contemplated. In this environment, change is threatening, and the change agents who do emerge are viewed with distrust, are objects of organizational discomfort, and in the ecology of the institution are maladapted for survival. In the words of David Kearnes, former CEO of Xerox, change agents in education must resort to being "canny outlaws" in order to ply their trade of innovation and creativity within the educational organization. Sadly, both for the sake of students and the ultimate survival of the institution, the greatest risk is not risking!

Breaking out of this situation requires interfacing the few risk-takers in education (educational entrepreneurs) with individuals in business and industry who understand their motivation and direction. This, in turn, will demonstrate to other educators why such change is valid and necessary, and less risky than they think.

The third reality for educational change requires a new view of financing education. Not simply pouring more money into education, for there is ample proof that this strategy does not work, and, in fact, numerous studies, including a recent one from the Brookings Institution, has concluded there is no correlation between the amount of money spent on the process of education and the quality of the educational output.

What is significant, however, is that there is a limit to the amount of money that our present tax-based system can spend on education, particularly in an era of Federal and State deficits, high demand for every tax dollar collected, and increasing resistance to tax increases. Legislators, educators, the business people, and the community at large must be mindful of the need to develop alternative sources of revenues to support public education.

The collective experience of our firm has demonstrated that while a few educational entities are catching on to this truth, most are still patiently waiting for taxpayers to pay the entire bill for public education. Community colleges, caught in the crush of insufficient funds in which to operate, frequently respond by cutting services, courses, and programs for students. This move, in turn, generally leads to the predictable downward spiral of less funds, leading to the offering of still fewer classes, which services less students, which reduces income even more, which leads to even more class reductions, leading to still less students, which-reduces income and service even more, etc. Negative spirals are tough to reverse!

Plans must be drawn to develop alternative revenue streams that will "recession proof" our schools, provide them with additional funds to pursue research and development of new instructional methods, produce a new system more relevant to the emerging needs of students, increase efficiency, and decrease the pressure on the tax system. All of this can be accomplished; but, to do so, requires a change in the basic paradigm of what colleges are all about.

The proposal that follows proposes the re-inventing higher education services and providing changes vital to the survival of the individuals in our communities and to our Nation. The purpose of the Education Mall is to be both an economic and an educational generator for the community. Its end result will be a better trained work force, on-going benefits to the business community, a reduction in taxes, and an increase in efficiency for both education and business. The greatest significance of all, however, is the increase in the service provided to individuals seeking both education and employment.

The Education Mall operates on the premise of the development of a symbiotic relationship between education and business. Education will serve as a provider of employee training services to business, will generate additional traffic flow into the Mall's commercial spaces, and will provide the commercial vendors in the Mall with a trainee work force and well-trained new employees. The business segment of the Mall will provide education with a financial support, laboratory spaces for their training programs, and ancillary students services (e.g. food services, bookstore, etc.). The staff of many of the commercial establishments of the Mall will be utilized as auxiliary faculty for special occupational training programs.

REDEVELOPMENT

Many communities are presently contemplating re-development projects. Many communities are also considering the need for expansion of community college education opportunities. The Education Mall is a logical solution for the efficient re-planning of a community's commercial and educational opportunities. Downtown redevelopment areas are prime locations for the Mall concept. A large single structure will work or a series of adjacent structures connected via indoor or outdoor walkways will work. There a very few physical limitations!

THE EDUCATION MALL

The Education Mall is a 21st Century Educational Delivery Center integrating a broad range of collegiate-level educational services with area business and industry and community re-development. From the outside, the Mall resembles a regular commercial shopping mall, with parking structures, multi-level buildings, multiple entry points, landscaping, and a location that is convenient to both public and private transportation.

On the inside, one will find the same wide walkways, multiple store fronts, colorful interiors, and a general configuration to be expected in such a center. In this center, however, there is a blend of commercial ventures and educational activities.

One store may sell shoes, clothing, or sporting goods, and provide students with a merchandising and marketing laboratory.

Another store front may be a Small Business Incubator, offering training assistance and counseling to the small business owner in a wide variety of areas such as development of a business plan, how to finance a business, merchandising, marketing, employee relations, inventory control, and contracts and contract negotiations.

At another location in the center one may find an Assessment Center, where individuals may come to gain a greater understanding of their educational needs or abilities and receive counseling that will provide them with new directions for their life.

Another store may sell books that are appropriate to the needs of the general public, and also sell texts that service the needs of students attending classes in the Mall.

Food services within the Mall will meet the needs of both the community and students, and will serve as a training laboratory for a Culinary Arts Program conducted at another location in the Mall.

In another area one may find a Business Skills Center where students can learn basic business skills, how to type, operate business machines, computers, and rapidly prepare themselves to seek and find employment. Self-paced classes in the Mall provide students with the opportunity to enter a class whenever they want to, and leave when they have acquired the amount of information they require to move on in their life.

At another site, Child Care is provided for both students and the community at large. This Child Care Center also offers classes for mothers and fathers in all aspects of parenting, and also provides training for individuals desiring to enter the Child Care occupation.

The Basic Skills Center provides students with deficiencies in their educational backgrounds with an opportunity to strengthen themselves to the point where they are able to enter the mainstream of educational opportunity.

A High Technology Learning Center (HTLC) provides a full spectrum of educational opportunities for students. This center provides students with individualized learning opportunities using the latest in high technology learning devices. Again, open to entry and exit at any time the student desires, there are no semesters or summer breaks at the Education Mall, only opportunities to advance at the learner's own pace. The High Technology Center also provide students the option of learning at the Education Mall or learning at home, through the use of home computers equipped with modems. The HTLC also provides a special collegiate program on audio tapes, affectionately called "Grid-Lock College", for students who desire to learn in their cars while they are commuting to and from work.

The Contract Education Center provides the commercial businesses in the Mall, and all other businesses within the entire community, with the opportunity to offer a complete employee training program. Through the Contract Education Process, employers can enter into agreements to have their employees trained in specific subjects in a custom designed program to fit the particular needs of the employer. This training can either take place at the employer's business location, or can be conducted at the Education Mall.

The Tutorial Center provides the "High Touch" counterpart to "High Tech". Within this center students are provided with individual attention and support as they pursue their studies.

A Fitness Center within the Mall caters to the physical health of both Mall Students and the general community. Operated as a commercial venture, it is also a training site for individuals who are interested in pursuing this occupational field.

A Woman's Center within the facility caters to the special needs of women, from re-entry counseling to continue their education, to health, wellness, and family living.

The Mall Conference Center will offer the latest in high technology communications, including satellite up and down links, an electronic decision center, and space to hold large and small meetings. The presence of a Hotel in the area will make possible holding conferences extending over several days.

The Dental Clinic offers preventative Dental Health counseling, cleaning, and referrals to area dentists. In addition, it provides a training laboratory for Dental Hygienists, and Dental Assistants.

The Entertainment Center within the Mall provides both motion picture and legitimate theater facilities, and provides students with opportunities in management, performance, and other phases of this business.

Commercial ventures within the Mall include specialty shops, clothing, automotive repair, food service, pet, music, and department stores, as well as an art gallery, library, and Cable Television Station.

SUPPORTIVE CONCEPTS:

The development of the Education Mall Concept has been driven by a number of factors that are presently facing our communities and our Nation:

1. **There is a limit to the support that the tax system can provide for public education.**

   Our State, as well as our Nation cannot continue to provide the amount of tax revenues necessary to adequately support education, while at the same time provide resources for the myriad of other functions that are currently needed by our society. As a consequence, there is a need to develop alternative funding sources that will both provide the financial level of support needed by education, and provide tax-payers with a measure of relief from their tax burdens.

   The Education Mall represents the next step in the evolution of the Community College, by interfacing a post-secondary education with the business, industry, and community it serves. Education will increasingly need the support of business and industry. A partnership is the logical solution. In this partnership, facilities and personnel will be shared to the mutual benefit of both participants.

2. **Today, there is a greater need than ever for education.**

   Illiteracy in the United States has reached at least 20%. A recent study says nearly 50%! Inner-city illiteracy for minorities is well over 50%. Inner city school drop rates reach as high as 70%. If this trend were to continue there would be developed a permanent class of people that are both unemployed and unemployable. This cannot be allowed to happen!

   In addition, the average employed person today will change careers five times in their life, each requiring retraining, and will require limited retraining in their present occupation every two to three years. In technological subjects, knowledge is doubling every two to five years, placing demands on individuals in these areas to stay abreast with change.

   Today, life-long learning is a fact of life for most individuals. The Education Mall is uniquely equipped to provide the total services necessary to meet all of the educational needs of the community in one location.

3. **Business and industry will have a continuing need for better trained workers, but will find the cost of training departments increasingly difficult to finance. Federal regulations will soon mandate such training activities.**

Cooperative agreements between post-secondary educational institutions and surrounding business and industry, will be wide-spread.

The Education Mall will broker educational services to business and industry within the community.

4. **Students will increasingly attend post-secondary education on a part-time basis while working full time.**

Because of the economic and social demands on their individual schedules, all levels of educational delivery must be made more convenient to students, both in terms of scheduling and location. Today, over 70% of community college students are attending school part-time, with nearly 50% taking six units or less. A growing number of students desire to take classes at non-traditional times of the day and year.

The Education Mall caters to the needs of the part-time student by providing educational opportunities that are more accessible; free of conventional day, semester, or yearly schedules; and capable of being received at home via either computer or cable television. The Educational Mall will provide services 365 days a year, 24 hours a day.

5. **Students have a need to pursue their education in such a manner as to combine upper and lower division classes, occupational classes, and recreational classes at the same convenient location.**

Today, the educational needs of students are becoming more diverse, and traditional paths of direct progression through lower division, upper division, and graduate school as an unbroken chain of events is altered by economic survival needs, occupational training and re-training, as well as other learning needs.

The Educational Mall will combine community college, public and private university courses, and other educational opportunities into a learning complex that will provide a centralized convenient location within the community for all post-secondary educational services.

6. **The learning environment of the future must include increased opportunities for students to pursue their education in individualized, self-paced modes of instructional delivery.**

Alternatives to traditional instructional delivery will include technology-based instruction, which will include computers, CD ROM, Video Disk, cable television, and other devices that permit students to learn independently.

As a result of the design of the Education Mall, students will have multiple opportunities to learn independently, and will be able to pursue this learning

at the Mall or at home. Laboratories within the Education Mall will be heavily dependent upon computer simulation, and less dependent upon traditional "hands-on" manipulation of equipment and materials. In the near-future, Virtual Reality Laboratories will revolutionize education in the Education Mall and will also be used for entertainment.

7. **Traditional campuses are expensive for taxpayers to build, operate, and maintain.**

Most traditional campuses sit idle for considerable periods of time during the day and year, are psychologically threatening to many students, tend to become out-of-date rapidly, are frequently distant from population centers, are difficult for disabled students to navigate, foster large staffs to operate and maintain them, and offer a wide variety of services, such as bookstores, and cafeterias, whose operation is outside of the expertise of most educators.

The Education Mall confronts all of these problems and produces a result that is more efficient, more "user friendly", easier for students as they register, check out learning materials, obtain special assistance, access records, and receive instruction either at the Mall or from their homes.

8. **With large numbers of career changes, Assessment Centers will play an increasingly important role as students are required to retrain for other occupational areas.**

Counseling will assume a greater diagnostic and prescriptive function with the development of more reliable assessment tools. Counselors will combine their increasing ability to assess individual student needs with the broadening of alternative forms instructional delivery to prescribe learning delivery modes that are consistent with the cognitive styles, learning needs, and available time of students.

The Education Mall will provide complete Assessment Services for both individuals and companies desiring to expand their knowledge of individual education levels, learning styles, and
abilities.

9. **Learning Resource Centers of the future will need to interface with collegiate, public, and private electronic databases, at the local, National, and international level.**

Increasing amounts of reference materials are being placed on electronic media. The Learning Resource Center of the future will be a mixture of traditional print-media and electronic resources, with a trend toward the replacement of print media sources with electronic counterparts.

The Education Mall will feature connecting links to both the local library data base and distance library data bases for retrieval of information. Access to commercial data bases (e.g. Compuserve) will also be provided. In

addition, electronic learning resource materials. CD ROM, video disk, computer software, cassette tapes, and other electronic learning materials will be available for use in the Learning Center.

10. **There will be an increasing use of conventional cable television and interactive cable television as an instructional delivery device. This service will be augmented by microwave links, satellite up and down links, and high definition television.**

Our society is visually-oriented to electronic media. Television is now a major force in the transmission of information. As the result, increasing efforts to uses for educational purposes are being recognized.

The Mall will have a Cable Television Head-End for distribution of learning materials to the community. Interactive live educational cable television will open educational opportunities for shut-ins and others not able to come to the campus for instruction. Microwave television and data transmission to area business and industry educational sites, and other regional learning sites will expand the Education Mall's opportunities to deliver instruction to students. Linkages, via microwave, to other educational institutions at all levels will also be accomplished. Satellite Tele-Conferencing via down-links and up-links, bringing remote conferences to the Mall and making possible the economical assembling of groups of individuals for special meetings, workshops, and conferences in the Mall's Conference Center.